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The Executive Department

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The Executive Department

According to the constitution of Iowa, the "Supreme Executive power of the State shall be vested in a Chief Magistrate, who shall be styled the Governor of the State of Iowa." There shall, likewise, be a Lieutenant Governor who shall be elected at the same time, and serve simultaneously with the chief executive. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor, therefore, constitute the chief officers of the executive branch of our state government.

To be eligible for election to the office of Governor of Iowa, one must be a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state of Iowa for a period of two years prior to the date of election, and he must have attained the age of thirty at the time of his election. Candidates for the offices of Governor and Lieutenant Governor are nominated at the primary election in June of the even-numbered years and elected at the general election in November of the same year. They enter upon their duties in January of the following year.

The inaugural is an historic and impressive occasion. Before a joint assembly of the Senate and the House of Representatives, with the House Chamber appropriately decorated for the occa-



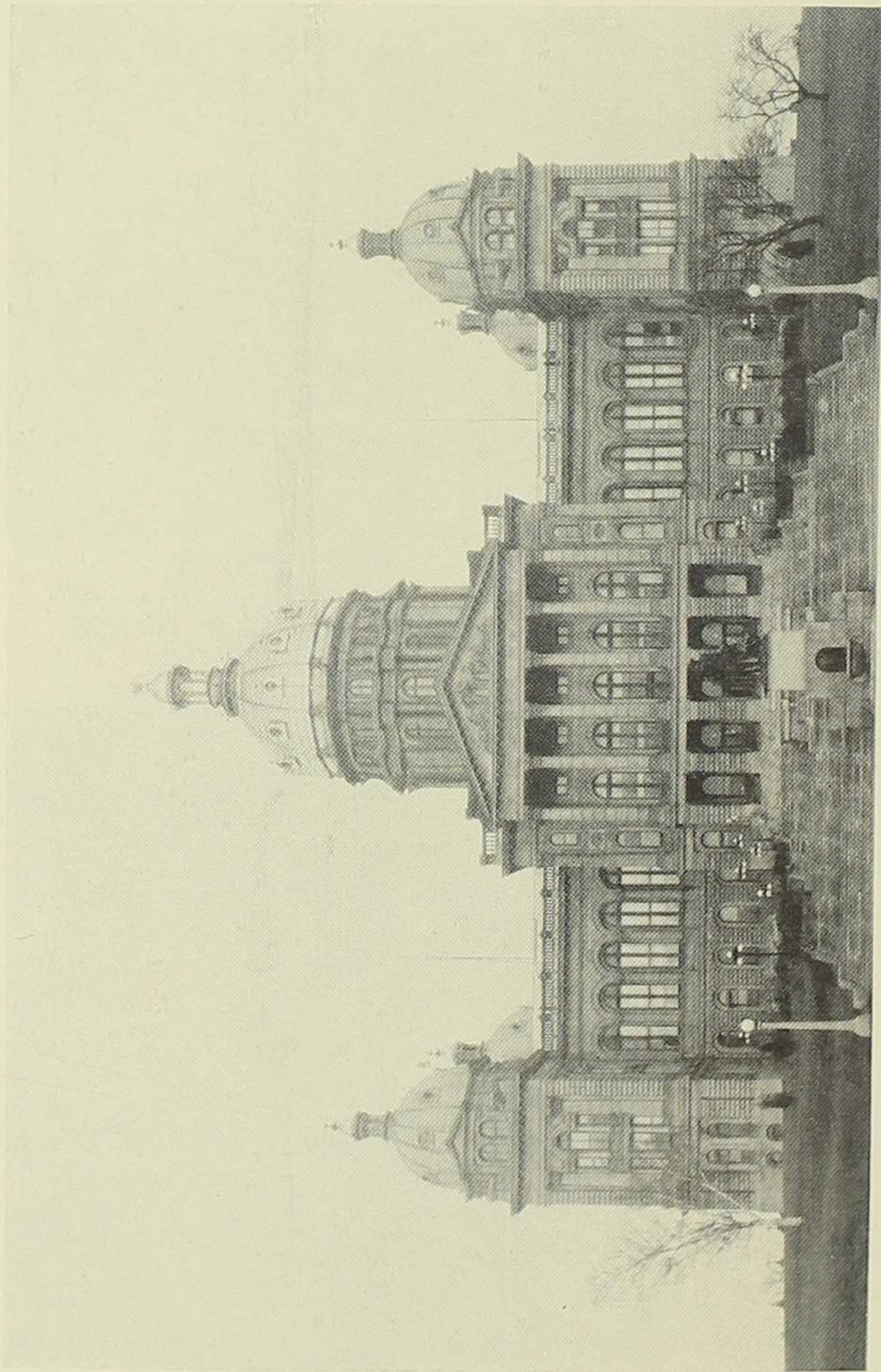
PHOTO COURTESY JOHN HAEFNER

SENATOR MERCER INTRODUCES UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS TO GOVERNOR WILSON



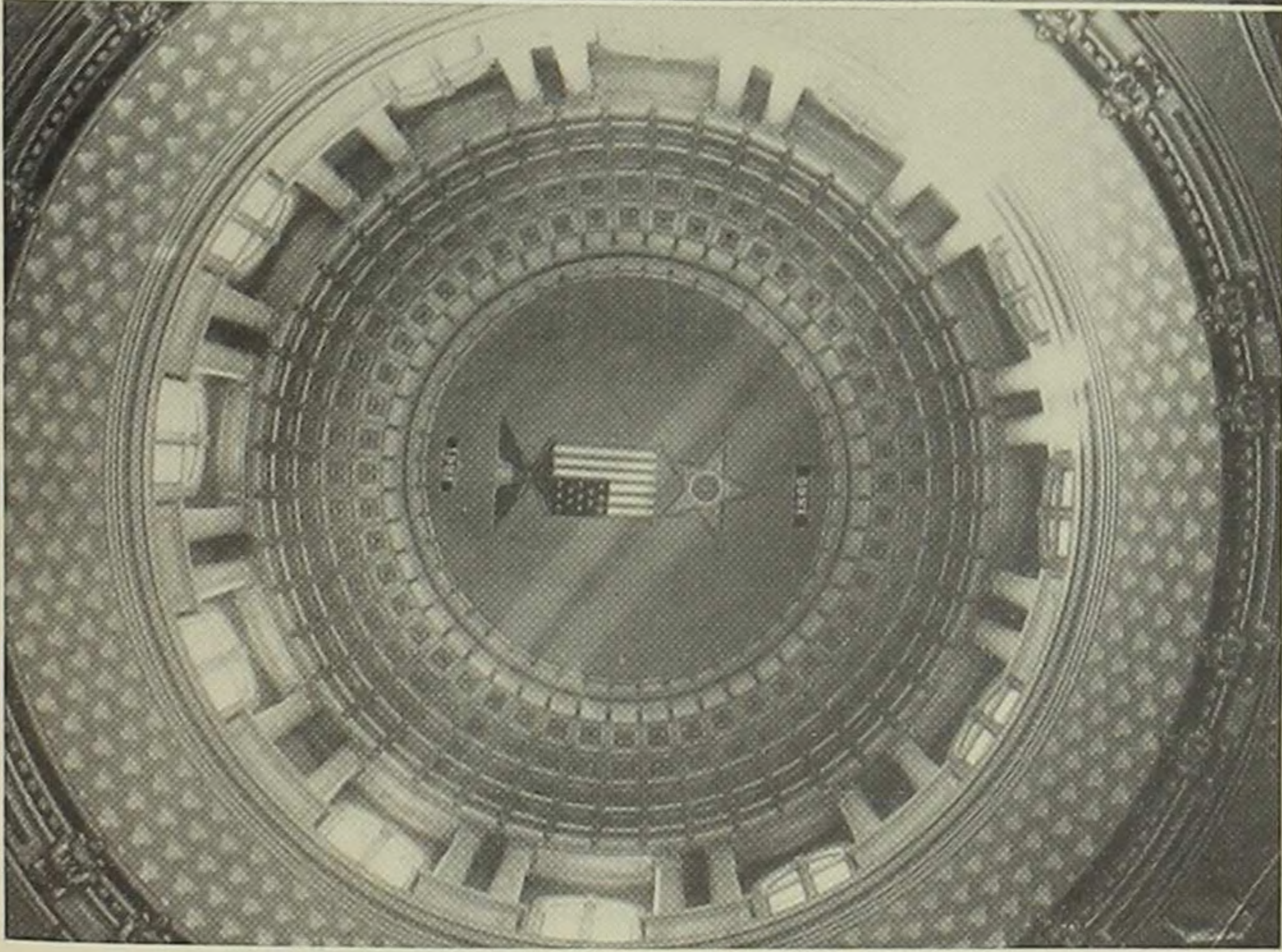
DES MOINES REGISTER PHOTO

GOVERNOR BEARDSLEY GREETES TAMA INDIAN SCHOOL
CHILDREN IN HIS OFFICE

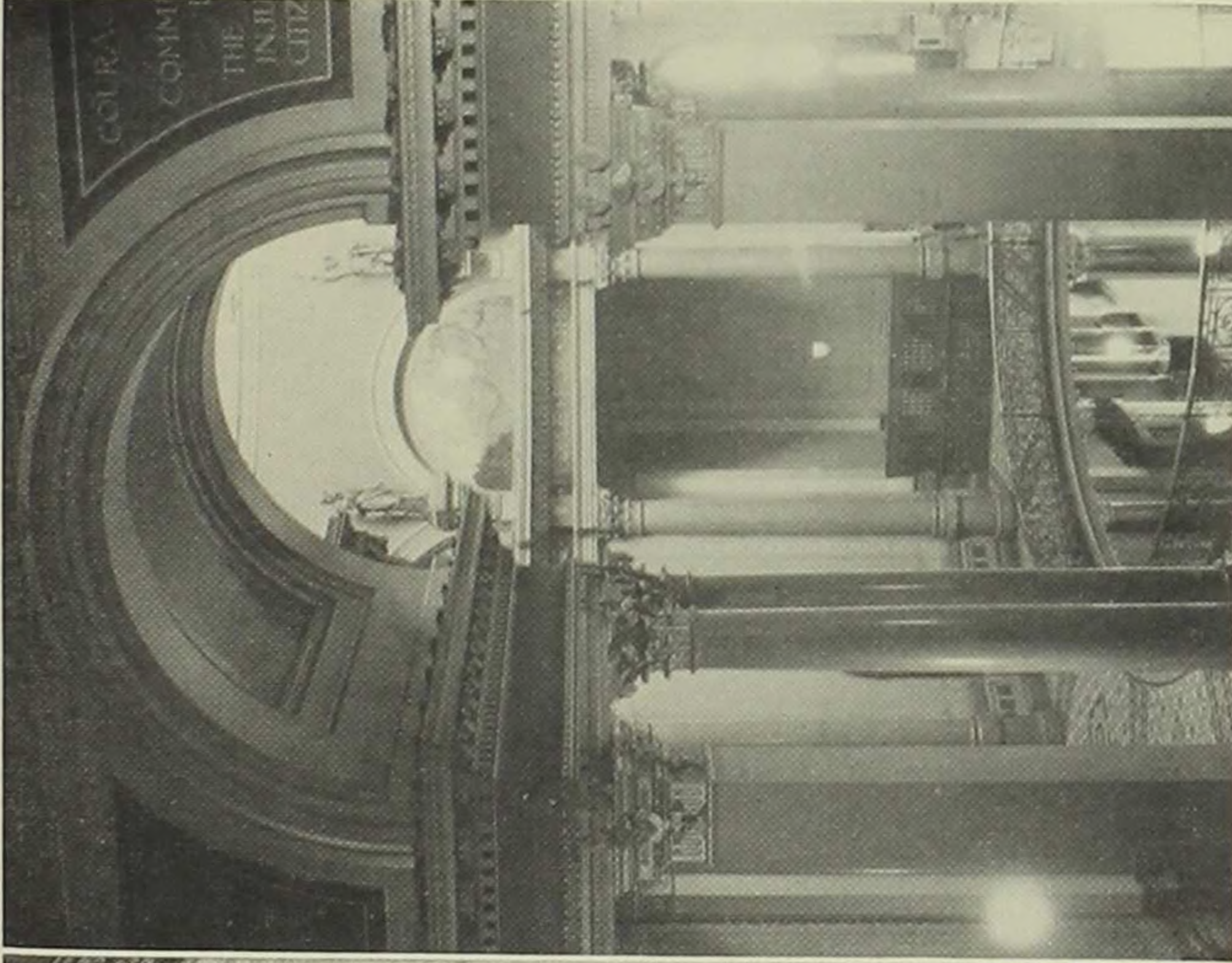


FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BITTLE

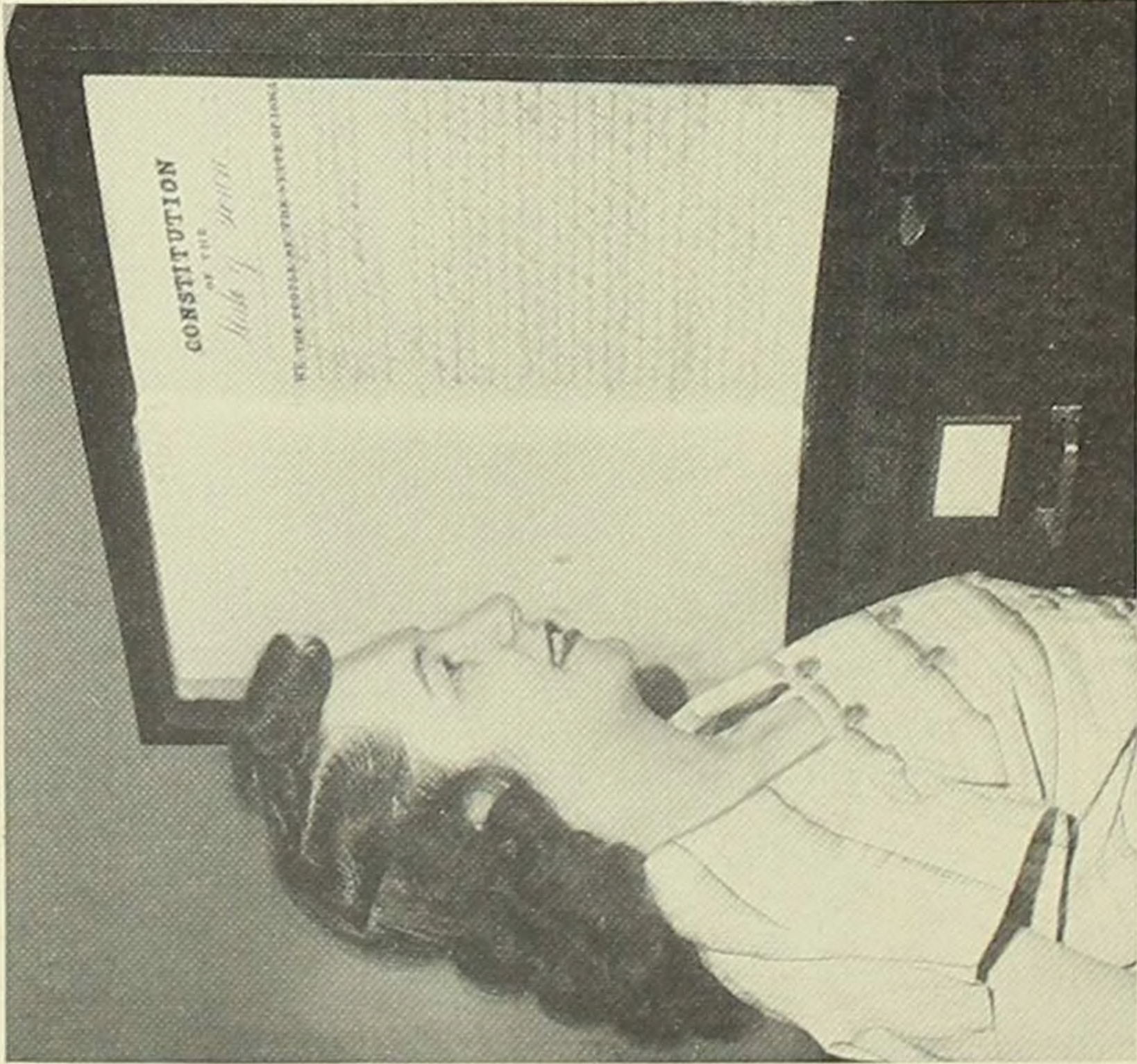
THE STATE CAPITOL AT DES MOINES



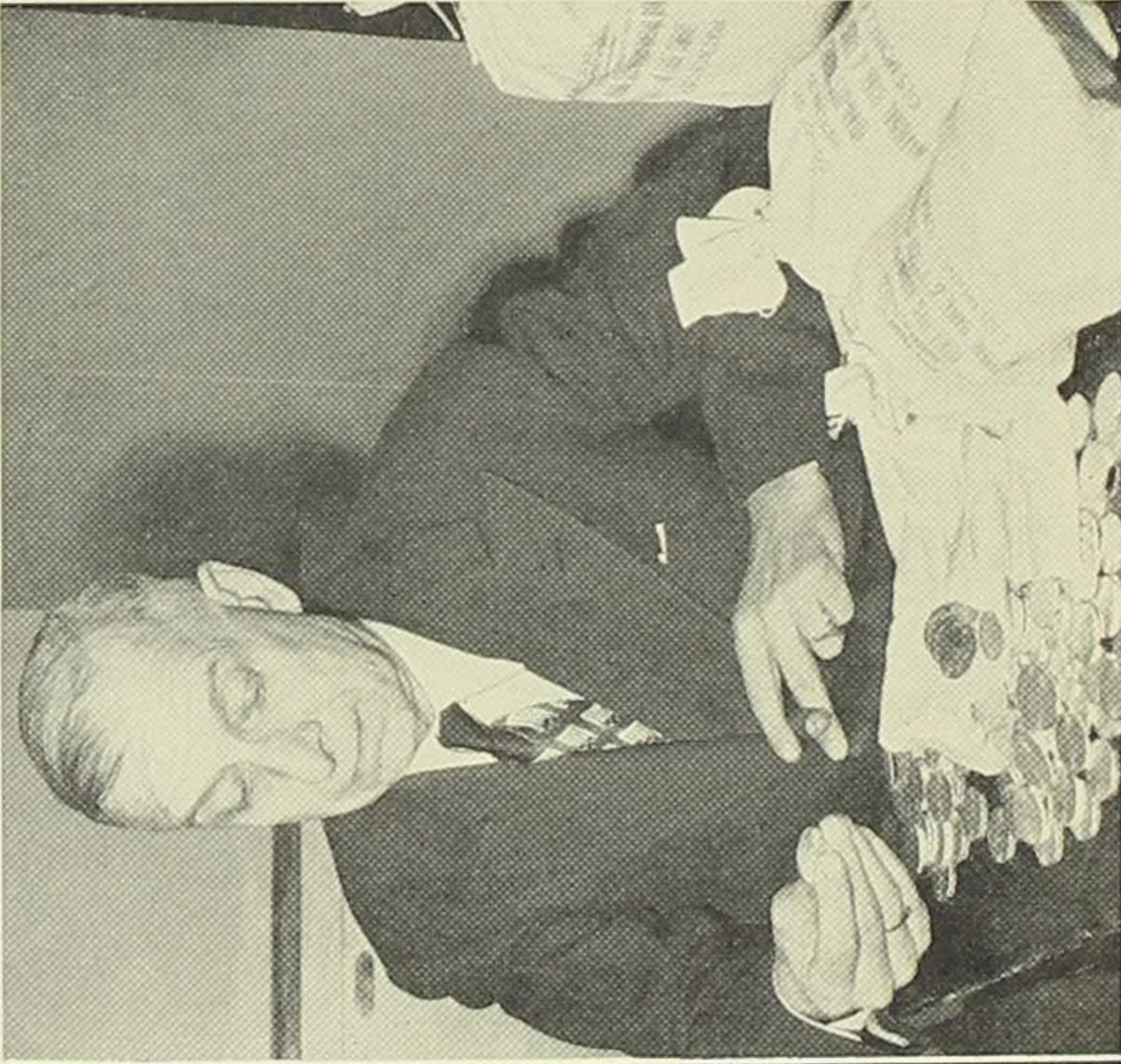
DOME OF STATE CAPITOL WITH G.A.R. EMBLEM



DES MOINES REGISTER PHOTOS
 SECTION OF ROTUNDA OF STATE CAPITOL



STUDYING ORIGINAL IOWA CONSTITUTION IN
OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE



DES MOINES REGISTER PHOTOS
CONG. KARL LE COMPTE EXAMINES IOWA
CENTENNIAL COIN WHICH HE SPONSORED

sion, with the pomp and dignity of state, and with many distinguished guests present, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor are escorted to the rostrum, where the oath of office is administered by a Justice of the Supreme Court of Iowa. Following the installation, the chief executive delivers his inaugural address — his first official act as Governor of the State.

As we witness such a scene our minds go back across the years of Iowa history to note some of the stalwart men who have filled that high office. Among them the names of Lucas, Grimes, Kirkwood, Larrabee, Shaw, and Cummins stand out in bold relief. There are others, too, whose names will long be remembered in the annals of Iowa history.

Thirty-three men have served as Governor of Iowa — three during the territorial period and thirty since Iowa became a state. Five of these men were born in New York, and four in Pennsylvania. Two were born in each of the states of Connecticut, Illinois, Ohio, and Vermont. Eight were born in Iowa and the remaining eight in other states.

Some of the men who have served as chief executives of Iowa have had military experience. Robert Lucas and John Chambers fought in the War of 1812, and Stephen Hempstead served in the Black Hawk War. Three were colonels, two

captains, and one a brigadier general in the Civil War. One was wounded at the Battle of Shiloh. Another was wounded at Blue Mills, taken prisoner at Shiloh, released through an exchange of prisoners, and wounded again at Vicksburg. Two of the Governors of Iowa served in the Spanish-American War, and two are veterans of World War I.

Our first state Governor, Ansel Briggs, was a stagecoach driver. In contrast, Clyde Herring was a dealer in automobiles. Horace Boies was born in a log cabin in New York and came west "with his possessions wrapped in a red bandana handkerchief." Cyrus C. Carpenter came to Iowa as a poor lad and walked from Des Moines to Fort Dodge carrying his worldly goods in a "carpet sack." There were two editors, three farmers, four merchants, and twenty students of the law among them. Two were millers and several were interested in banking. Most of the men were content to earn their livelihood, directly or indirectly, from the soil of Iowa. Governor Francis M. Drake made a fortune by mining gold in California.

Two Governors — John Chambers and James W. Grimes — were Whigs. Seven were Democrats — Robert Lucas, James Clarke, Ansel Briggs, Stephen Hempstead, Horace Boies, Clyde L. Herring, and Nelson G. Kraschel. The remain-

ing twenty-four were members of the Republican party.

Before coming to Iowa several of these men had had legislative experience: one in New York, another in New Hampshire, one in Kentucky, and another in Ohio. Lucas had been Governor of Ohio before he became Governor of Iowa. Four of these men served in the Constitutional Convention of 1844, and twenty-two, at some time in their careers, served in the legislature of Iowa. Nine of them became members of Congress, and two (Kirkwood and Shaw) attained the distinction of serving in Presidents' cabinets. James Clarke became Governor at the age of thirty-three. Horace Boies did not attain that office until he was sixty-two. One of the Governors died at the age of thirty-eight. Fourteen — almost one-half of the whole number — have lived more than the allotted span of three score and ten years, and one attained the ripe old age of ninety-five. Five of the men who have served as Governor of Iowa are still living. All of these men have served faithfully and well in order that Iowa might attain and hold a place of high rank in the sisterhood of states.

A Governor who takes the oath of office must, at that moment, feel a sense of grave responsibility resting upon him. In his inaugural address on January 13, 1949, Governor William S. Beardsley

strongly emphasized this point when he said:

"In taking this solemn oath to support the Constitution of the United States and of the State of Iowa, I am profoundly impressed with the great responsibility reposed in me by the voters of this great state. I am happy to be a citizen of Iowa. I love her farm homes, her beautiful towns, her cities, and most of all her people.

"One has to experience the weight of this obligation to feel the full impact of its significance. To me, it is the assumption of a very real responsibility. In accepting this great honor, I do so with humility and with a high resolve that my every effort shall be devoted to the public welfare. May God give me strength, wisdom and guidance in the performance of my duties as Governor of this great Commonwealth."

Since a Governor is responsible for directing matters of state legislation, his inaugural address usually calls attention to current problems of legislation and makes some suggestions for their solution. Governor Beardsley, for example, touched upon the subjects of taxation, soldiers' bonus, business administration, roads, education, conservation and flood control, labor and conciliation, and human needs.

The duties of the Governor are varied and numerous. They range from his military functions to his political, economic, and social duties. The

constitution provides that the Governor "shall be commander in chief of the militia, the army, and navy" of the state. To be sure, Iowa, as a state, does not have a navy or even an army. This provision was probably copied from a constitution of one of the older maritime states, but it is significant today in that it gives the governor authority to act in all military affairs in which state troops are needed.

But his duties are not primarily military. Indeed, much more of his time is devoted to executive, administrative, and legislative functions. "He shall transact all executive business with the officers of government, civil and military, and may require information in writing from the officers of the executive department upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices."

The makers of the Constitution of 1857 were men of wisdom and discretion. They did not assign to elective officers minute and detailed duties that might change with the passing of the seasons. The powers were briefly stated, but they were broad and comprehensive in scope and very general in character. A single sentence in the Constitution of Iowa assigns to the Governor extensive duties and grave responsibilities: "He shall take care that the laws are faithfully executed." The manner in which this may be done is largely a matter of discretion with the Governor himself.

From a constitutional and legalistic standpoint methods are of little consequence, only results are important. Thus a great executive is one who assumes responsibilities on a broad basis, and so coordinates his work through the several departments that effective and efficient management will result throughout the organization.

The Governor of Iowa, as the chief executive of the state, makes many appointments of persons charged with the duty of assisting in proper enforcement and administration of the laws. Thus he appoints the Adjutant General, the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Industrial Commissioner, and the Labor Commissioner. He also appoints the members of the Board of Control, Development Commission, Employment Security Commission, Board of Health, Highway Commission, Liquor Control Commission, Parole Board, Printing Board, River-front Commission, State Conservation Commission, Board of Education, Tax Commission, and Uniform State Law Commission. In addition to these and other appointments, he fills many vacancies.

The Governor is a member of the Executive Council, usually serving as chairman of that group. Although other members of the council are elected in the same manner as the Governor, his presence on the council affords him an opportunity to coordinate and in a measure furnish lead-

ership for all administrative divisions of the state government.

His duties in connection with legislative matters are very important. In his inaugural address and in his biennial message to the General Assembly the Governor suggests and outlines a legislative program. But his interests and responsibilities go much further than that. An important item in matters of legislation is the budget. For the planning of this, the Governor is in a large measure responsible. Not later than February 1st, of the year in which the General Assembly convenes, the Governor is required to "transmit to the legislature a document to be known as a budget, setting forth his financial program for each of the fiscal years of the ensuing biennium." This budget consists of three parts: the "Governor's budget message," "recommended appropriations," and "appropriation bills." Thus the Governor sets the pattern for legislative expenditures, which may be amended and changed at many points, but he never ceases to be responsible, in a measure, for a sound financial policy.

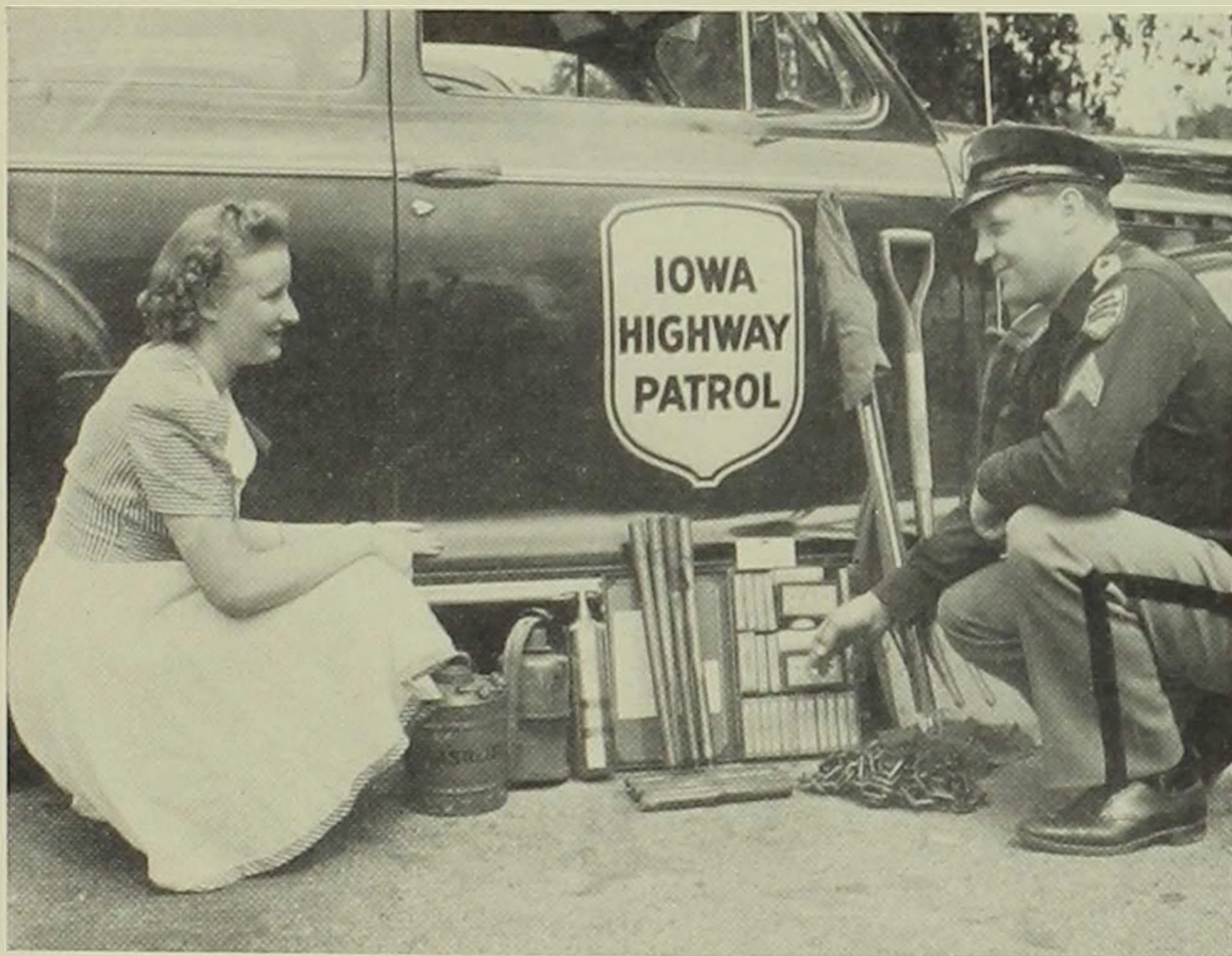
All laws of whatever character, passed by the General Assembly, are submitted to the Governor for his approval and signature. If he approves, he signs the bills and they go into effect. If he disapproves he refuses to sign and the bills can then become operative only if they are passed over his

veto by a two-thirds vote of all members of each house.

The Governor thus wields important legislative influence through the exercise of his veto power. During the nine years of Iowa's territorial history the veto power was exercised 22 times — 15 times by Governor Robert Lucas, 11 times in a single year. In the 103 years since territorial days the veto has been used 104 times. In recent years it was used most frequently by governors John Hammill, George Wilson, and Robert D. Blue. In territorial days the legislative body sometimes passed bills over the Governor's veto, but in recent years executive vetoes have seldom been vigorously contested.

The judiciary in Iowa is a separate and independent branch of the government, relatively free from executive control. But even here the Governor exerts some influence in that he may appoint judges to fill vacancies in the courts of record and in municipal and superior courts.

In the field of state politics the Governor exercises great influence. In a political campaign he is the highest ranking candidate on the state ticket. Usually other aspirants to state offices do not announce their candidacy until the Governor decides whether or not he will again head the state ticket. If the incumbent Governor is not to be a candidate for re-election, other gubernatorial candidates



DES MOINES REGISTER PHOTO

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
Iowa Highway Patrolman explains his job to fair citizen

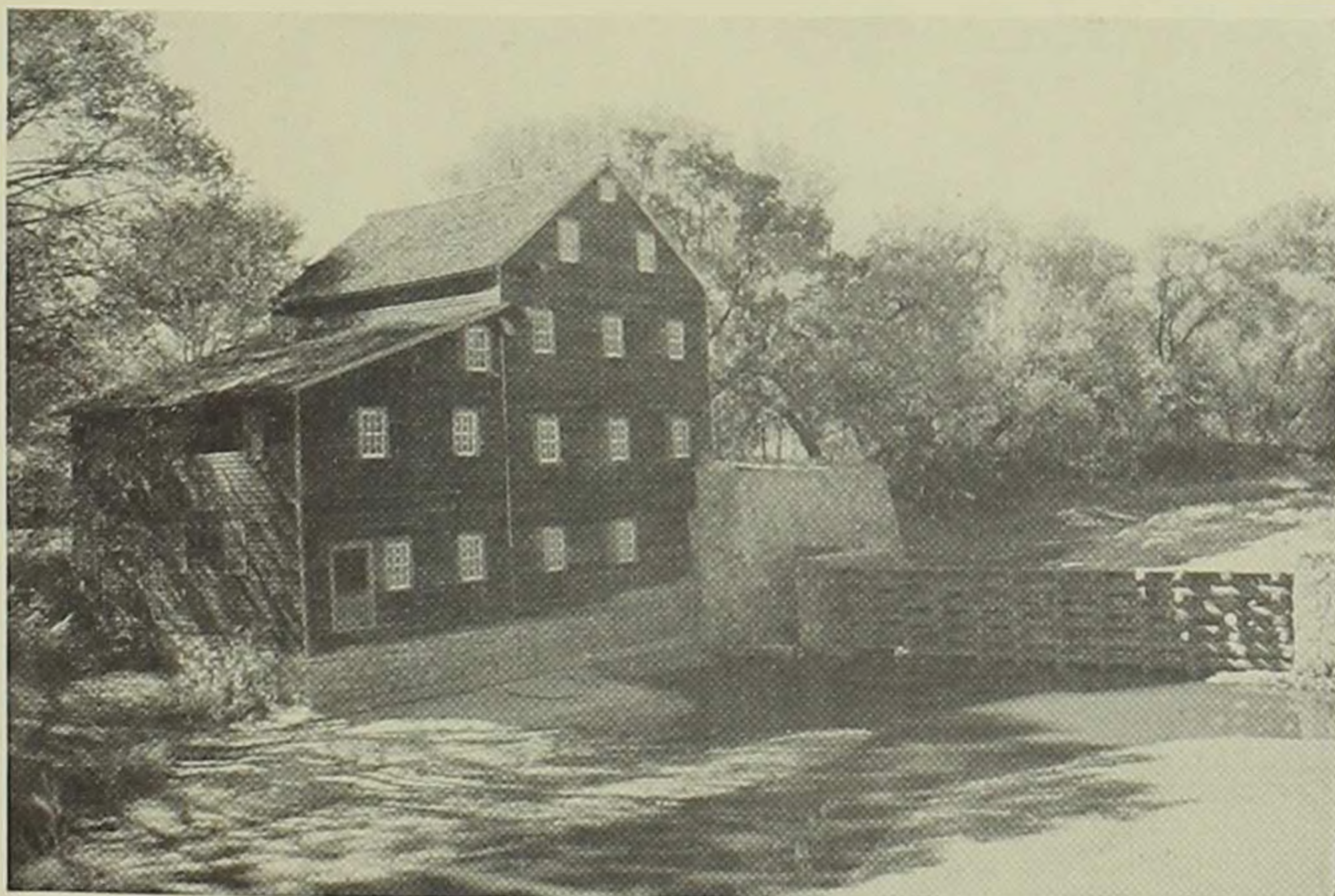


PHOTO BY JOHN E. BRIGGS

STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Reconstructed Pine Creek Mill in Wild Cat Den State Park



IOWA SUPREME COURT: 1949

Back row—H. J. Mantz, W. A. Smith, John E. Mulroney, Chas. F. Wennerstrum, Norman R. Hays

Front row—Oscar Hale, Ralph A. Oliver, T. G. Garfield, William L. Bliss



INTERIM COMMITTEE: 1949

Learning Facts First-Hand at Oakdale Sanitarium

usually announce early. Throughout the campaign, the candidate for Governor is recognized as the party leader, and is much in demand at political meetings throughout the state.

Socially, the Governor of the state plays an important role. The inaugural ball at the State House is a gala occasion. In his spacious home — the Governor's Mansion at 2900 Grand Avenue — the Governor and his wife receive many guests. At his office in the Capitol the Governor is a busy man, but even there he frequently pauses from other duties to receive a delegation of friends or a group of school children who may be visiting the State House. Throughout his term of service, the Governor gives generously of his time in addressing groups of citizens at anniversaries, reunions, and public gatherings of various types in all parts of the state.

Thus, the Governor of Iowa is a man of influence and power — widely recognized for his abilities and for his interest in public affairs. Yet there is a rule of long standing which applies here. He who would be "greatest among us," must be "the servant of all." The Governor of Iowa holds a distinct place as leader in the state, yet in a sense he is a servant of the entire citizenry.